



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

August 20, 2014

Former Tennessee State Museum Employee Uses Scheme to Take Thousands

A new investigative report from the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury reveals that a former administrative services assistant with the Tennessee State Museum took \$61,892.04 in taxpayer money. The Comptroller's Office worked with the chief investigator from the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General to complete its investigation.

In February 2014 investigators began to identify a cash shortage created by the former administrative services assistant. Investigators discovered the employee used a scheme to falsify 26 invoices and submit them for payment to her personal account. The employee used her role as a processor of purchase orders and requisitions to create phony invoices for historical artifacts. The employee admitted to creating the false invoices and submitting them for payment with photocopies of her supervisor's signature. These payments totaled \$49,476.97.

Investigators also discovered the employee used a rental car for 15 months, and billed \$12,415.97 to the Tennessee State Museum. The employee admitted she improperly charged the rental fees to the museum after her personal car broke down. Her employment has been terminated.

Investigators determined the administrative services assistant was a convicted felon on parole for a theft of property over \$60,000. Museum officials were not aware of her conviction at the time she was hired in April 2011. The former employee was originally hired by Adecco USA in November 2008 to provide temporary and contract employment to other state agencies. The employee disclosed three prior convictions on her Adecco USA application. The Museum Commission is taking steps to require background checks on all future employees.

Investigators recommend the Tennessee State Museum reconcile purchases with inventory records on a monthly basis. Errors can remain undiscovered without proper review.

"The Tennessee State Museum helps preserve, protect and share our state's fascinating history," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "We must also protect taxpayer dollars to ensure the continued success of this institution."

To view the investigation online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

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